

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 14, 1998 LB 512, 1175

Robinson.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Call the question.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: I don't believe there's been sufficient debate. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I don't know why our numbers are so few, but I have an idea. However, I want to discuss what it is that I'm looking at in this matter because a reporter had asked me some questions, and maybe I hadn't thoroughly explained why it is that I'm doing what I'm proposing this afternoon. In politics, the state is supreme, and I mean that entity known as Nebraska, now, because we know the U.S. government is supreme over all of the country. When the state in statute writes what, in effect, is a blank check, the state is giving up part of its sovereignty. It is putting others in a position to dictate to the state what it is going to do and what it must do with the money which the state derives from the citizens. The state should never put itself in that position. If, by way of an appropriation, and the statutes define what constitutes an appropriation, the constitution tells us how this is done, from year to year the state does this based on facts and information which is presented preceding that particular appropriation. But to write a blank check which allows people at a future time, who are not members of the Legislature, to dictate what the state is going to spend is not wise at all. This is not the first time this session that I have raised this issue. LB 512, which Senator Will brought to us, had a provision that said the state would pay 50 percent of whatever a county expended for certain juvenile services. I had a number of reasons for opposing that, but the major one was that the county was going to be able to dictate to the state without limitation what the state was going to have to spend. The state must retain its sovereignty, its supremacy, and to delegate or turn that authority and that power over to anybody or any collection of bodies is not the appropriate thing to do. If this motion is adopted, we would not have to stay here until Friday. Senator Wickersham's amendment could be removed. That bill could go upstairs today and come back down today if we chose to work it that way. It would lay over tomorrow, which is Wednesday, and a vote could be taken on what remained Thursday.